

REMARKS

Claims 22-36 are pending.

Claims 25-35 are allowed.

Claims 22, 25, and 36 are independent claims.

Claims 25, 29, 30, 32, 33, and 36 are amended.

I. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's allowance of claims 25-35. Applicants have amended claims 25, 29, 30, 32, and 33 to correct minor informalities. No new matter has been added by these amendments and Applicants submit these amendments do not affect the allowability or narrow the scope of these claims. Claim 36 also has been amended to correct a minor informality. The amendment to claim 36 is not intended to narrow the scope of this claim.

II. CLAIM REJECTIONS 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 22-24 and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,873,388 (hereinafter "Carpenter") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,919,425 (hereinafter "Nguyen") and U.S. Patent No. 4,719,088 (hereinafter "Itoh"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the prior art must teach or suggest all the claim features. Applicants submit Carpenter, Nguyen, and Itoh neither alone nor in combination teach or suggest all claim features of claims 22-24 and 36. Specifically, independent claim 22 recites a "scrubbing chamber containing coated packing in at least two vertically

separated beds." Amended independent claim 36 recites similar features.

The Examiner concedes Carpenter fails to disclose a scrubbing chamber. As Carpenter does not show a scrubbing chamber, it similarly does not show a "scrubbing chamber containing coated packing in at least two vertically separated beds" as recited in claim 22.

The Examiner relies on Nguyen (Col. 6, lines 27-67) to show packing material, but does not address a scrubbing chamber with two vertically separated beds. Further, the section of Nguyen cited by the Examiner is directed toward the packing material and not the configuration of the scrubbing chamber. See, for example, Col. 6, lines 62-67. Applicants submit neither this nor any other section of Nguyen appears to show the above-described feature of independent claim 22.

On Page 4 of the current Office Action, the Examiner states Itoh discloses a scrubbing chamber having various types of packing. Itoh discloses "[a] packed column having various kinds of packing materials" (Itoh, Col. 1, lines 23-24). This appears to be a single column of packing material, not "two vertically separated beds" as recited in claim 22. See, for example, FIG. 1. Neither this section, nor any other part of Itoh appears to teach or suggest a "scrubbing chamber containing coated packing in at least two vertically separated beds" as recited in Applicants' independent claim 22.

Accordingly, as Carpenter, Nguyen, and Itoh do not appear to show all claim features of claim 22 alone or in combination, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Amended independent claim 36 similarly recites

"at least two vertically separated beds." For at least the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 22, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 36.


Claims 23 and 24 are dependent on independent claim 22 and are submitted as allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 22.

III. Conclusion

The Applicants believe all the claims are now in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the same.

A separate Petition for Revival of an Application for Patent Abandoned Unintentionally is enclosed. Please charge the Petition fee and any extension fees which may be required to deposit account No. 04-1696. Applicants do not believe any other fees are due regarding this amendment. If any other fees are required, however, please charge Deposit Account No. 04-1696. If any extension of time is required, please consider this a petition for the same. The Applicants encourage the Examiner to telephone Applicants' attorney should any issues remain.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Dated: July 13, 2005
Tarrytown, New York